

## Marion County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) - Instructions to **MAKE YOUR OWN RAIN BARREL**

A rain barrel is utilized to catch and store rainwater from your roof until it is needed for landscaping purposes. Water from a rain barrel should NEVER be used for drinking water.

- Plastic 55-gallon drums are recommended for safely collecting water with minimal leaking
- Holes must be cut into the top of the barrel. It is important to cover the top of the barrel with fiberglass window screen to prevent mosquitoes and other disease-carrying insects from entering the barrel.
- The top drain should remain closed until you decide to add a second rain barrel, creating a series of collection units.
- The bottom faucet should be kept in the closed position until you are ready to use water from your rain barrel

### SUPPLIES

- 1- Recycled Barrel
- 1 - 3/4" faucet
- 1 - 3/4" adapter SxFPT
- 1 - 3/4" male hose to FIP adapter
- 1 - 3/4" garden hose cap
- 1 roll of Teflon tape
- 1 tube of purpose caulk or plumbing sealant
- Piece of fiberglass window screen for top of barrel

### TOOLS

- Electric drill
- Electric jigsaw
- 1" spade drill bit
- 7/8" spade drill bit
- Utility knife
- Marker
- Rubber mallet

### TOP OF BARREL

- Use template to mark placement of holes on the top of the barrel
- Using a 1" spade bit pre-drill a small hole in each of the marked areas
- Using a jigsaw, cut out the marked areas
- Remove lid from barrel
- When lower drain and upper drain steps have been completed, lay fiberglass window screen over barrel opening, replace lid

### LOWER DRAIN

- Mark area at least 2" from bottom of barrel. This area may be higher to allow for placement of bucket or watering can under faucet. Extra water in barrel will add weight to keep barrel in place.
- Using 7/8" spade bit, drill hole
- Screw faucet into hole. Use utility knife to increase hole size as needed. Remove faucet, wrap threads with Teflon tape, replace faucet
- From the inside of barrel, screw on the 3/4" adapter SxFPT
- On the outside of the barrel, caulk area where barrel and faucet meet to reduce leakage



## UPPER DRAIN

- Mark area 3" from the top of the barrel. This can be on either the left or the right side of the barrel, based on the location of the lower drain
- Using 1" spade bit, drill hole
- push 3/4" male hose adapter into hole (you may need to use the knife to make the hole a bit larger or the rubber mallet to push the adapter into the hole)
- On the outside of the barrel, caulk area where adapter and barrel meet to reduce leakage
- Use this as an overflow outlet, use with hose to connect to another barrel or place garden hose cap on adapter until, a second rain barrel is installed

## CREATE A STABLE PLATFORM

- You can utilize concrete pavers or bricks to create a level surface where the rain barrel will be located
- Place concrete blocks on the level surface either side-by-side or in a triangular shape
- Place empty rain barrel on top of concrete blocks



## PREPARING YOUR DOWNSPOUT

- Top cut: Using a hacksaw, cut the down-spout approximately 12" above the top of the rain barrel (while on concrete blocks)
- Bottom cut: Using a hacksaw, cut the down-spout approximately 36" below the top cut
- The cut edges of the down spout will be sharp. You may wish to crimp the cut ends with pliers (bending the cuts inward)
- Place the appropriate flexible down-spout attachment onto the upper end of the down-spout
- The other end of the flexible downspout attachment can be placed on the lid of the barrel or can be re-attached to the bottom down-spout as necessary.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Water from your rain barrel is not for human or pet consumption.
- Your rain barrel must be emptied prior to winter to prevent damage to the barrel.
- If you wish to add a second rain barrel, connect the barrels by adding a piece of garden hose from the upper drain of the first barrel to the upper drain of the second barrel.
- Rain barrels can be painted (with special paint for plastic) to blend in with your siding or landscaping.

See [www.marionswcd.org](http://www.marionswcd.org) for more information!

